

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02703 01 OF 02 270735Z

21

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-07 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /100 W
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7142

INFO USUN NEW YORK 1753

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 2703

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESCAP

SUBJECT: ESCAP: SOUTH VIETNAMESE CALL FOR SOUTHEAST
ASIAN PEACE CONFERENCE

1. SUMMARY: WE HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY DUONG KICH
NHUONG, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS
AND HEAD OF REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DELEGATION TO ESCAP,
WITH COPY OF SPEECH NHUONG PROPOSES DELIVER IN PLENARY
BEFORE END OF THIS WEEK. IN ADDITION TO BROADBRUSH
SKETCHING OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM
NHUONG STRESSES NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION
AND PROPOSES CONVENING OF CONFERENCE OF "ALL
TEN SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING NORTH VIETNAM"
TO ORGANIZE ENDURING INDOCHINA PEACE. NHUONG HAS
ASKED U.S. ESCAP DELEGATION IF PROPOSED SPEECH POSES ANY
PROBLEMS. BEFORE REPLYING, WE URGENTLY REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S
VIEWS ON POLITICAL ISSUES VIETNAMESE STATEMENT RAISES. INDIAN
GOVERNMENT AND ESCAP LEADERSHIP HAVE CLEARLY INDICATED THEIR
DESIRE AVOID HOT POLITICAL DEBATE OR CONTENTIONS ISSUES IN
ESCAP MEETING. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 02703 01 OF 02 270735Z

2. BULK OF NHUONG PAPER CONSISTS OF NONCONTROVERSIAL SUMMARY OF GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. IN TWO SPOTS, HOWEVER, POLITICAL ISSUES ARE RAISED. IN DISCUSSING PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN VIETNAM NHUONG USES FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: QUOTE: THE YEAR OF 1974 WAS QUITE CHALLENGING TO OUR NATION. IN FACT, THE PARIS AGREEMENT HAS NOT YET BROUGHT PEACE TO SOUTH VIETNAM AS EVERY PEACE-LOVING PEOPLE EXPECTED. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE REBUILT AND REORGANIZED THEIR ARMED FORCES WHICH WERE ALMOST DESTROYED IN LATE 1972. THE PARIS AGREEMENT HAS BEEN VIOLATED BY THEM MORE AND MORE SERIOUSLY.

THE SEIZURE OF TONG-LE-CHAN BASE IN APRIL 1974 AND THE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF PHUOC-LONG ON 7 JANUARY 1975 WERE A SERIES OF CONCRETE, OBVIOUS AND UNDENIABLE EVIDENCES OF THE NEW NVN AGGRESSION IN THE RVN, REGARDLESS OF WORLD OPINION, HUMAN CONSCIENCE AND THE PARIS AGREEMENT WHICH THEY HAD SIGNED.

ALONG WITH MILITARY ATTACKS, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE STEPPED UP THEIR ACTIVITIES AIMING AT SABOTAGING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, PREVENTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION EFFORTS AND LOOTING RICE AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS FROM THE PEOPLE.

SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES HAVE KILLED 11,732, WOUNDED 17,598 AND CAPTURED 40,591 CIVILIAN PEOPLE. UNQUOTE.

SUBSEQUENT LANGUAGE CALLING FOR CONVENING OF NEW PEACE CONFERENCE IS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE: TODAY, ONCE AGAIN, WE WISH TO APPEAL TO ALL NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH ALL OF YOU WHO ARE THEIR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES, TO CONVINCE NORTH VIETNAM TO STOP THEIR VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND TO RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE AT "LA CELLE SAINT CLOUD" AS WELL AS IN SAIGON WITHOUT ANY PRECONDITIONS FROM BOTH SIDES AS STATED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IN ITS DECLARATION ON NOVEMBER 7, 1974. UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AS THE MAJOR POWERS ARE SEEKING WAYS TO RESTORE PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE NATION MEMBERS OF THIS REGION NEED ALSO TO FIND AMONG THEMSELVES EITHER WAYS AND (SC) MEANS TO REACH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS, TO AGREE ON A COMMON COURSE OF ACTION TO ESTABLISH AND PRESERVE PEACE AND STABILITY IN THIS AREA, THE TWO BASIC CONDITIONS FOR ANY EFFORT OF RESTORING AND

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 02703 01 OF 02 270735Z

PRESERVING THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF OUR REGION.

TO REACH THIS GOAL, AS STATED BY OUR PRESIDENT AT THE APACL CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 21ST, 1974, THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM STANDS READY TO ATTEND SUCH A CONFERENCE OF ALL TEN SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING NORTH VIETNAM, A CONFERENCE THAT SHOULD BE CONVENED TO SEEK A PROPER WAY TO ESTABLISH A LONG-LASTING PEACE FOR THE SEA REGION, TO LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE ECONOMIC

AND CULTURAL FIELD AMONG THE NATION MEMBERS IN THIS AREA
AND TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH THE BASIS FOR THE RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES IN THIS AREA AND WITH THE MAJOR
POWERS OF THE WORLD. UNQUOTE.

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02703 02 OF 02 270811Z

12

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 NEW DELHI 2703

3 IN REACTING TO THE VIETNAMESE REQUEST FOR COMMENT WE HAVE,
WE FEEL, FIVE BASIC OPTIONS:

(A) WE CAN TAKE POSITION THAT SOUTH VIETNAM IS AN
INDEPENDENT COUNTRY SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS ACTIONS IN
ESCAP. PURSUANT THIS OPTION WE WOULD SIMPLY RETURN THE TEXT
OF MR. NHUONG'S SPEECH WITH THANKS BUT WITHOUT COMMENTS;

(B) ALTERNATIVELY, WE CAN RETURN THE SPEECH TO NHUONG
WITH THE COMMENTS THAT THE REFERENCES TO NORTH VIETNAM'S
AGGRESSION AND THE PROPOSED PEACE CONFERENCE MAY BE
INFLAMMATORY IN ESCAP CONTEXT AND OCCASION SHARP ATTACKS
FROM OTHER DELEGATIONS. PURSUANT THIS OPTION WE WOULD
EMPHASIZE THAT ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT DISPUTE THE CONTENTS OF
ACCURACY OF SPEECH WE WOULD NOT BE PREPARED TO PUBLICLY BACK
SVN IN THE EVENT OF A FLOOR FIGHT;

(C) THIRD OPTION WOULD POINT OUT THE INFLAMMATORY NATURE OF THE SPEECH BUT ASSURE THE VIETNAMESE THAT IF A PROBLEM SHOULD ARISE THAT THEY WOULD HAVE OUT FULL SUPPORT ON THE FLOOR OF THE PLENARY;
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 02703 02 OF 02 270811Z

(D) FOURTH POSSIBILITY IS TO SUGGEST TO THE VIETNAMESE THAT THEY TONE DOWN THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE SPEECH, EMPHASIZING THAT ALTHOUGH WE AGREE WITH THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED, WE DO NOT FEEL THAT THE ESCAP PLENARY IS A PROPER FORUM FOR THESE COMMENTS. IN THE EVENT THAT THE VIETNAMESE DID SOFTEN THEIR REMARKS, WE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE UNDER A CLEAR OBLIGATION TO SUPPORT THEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHOULD THEY NOT CARE TO TONE DOWN THEIR REMARKS, WE WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO BACK THEM ON THE FLOOR (OPTIONS B AND C);

(E) FINALLY WE CAN SUGGEST TO THE VIETNAMESE THAT THEY SIMPLY CUT OUT COMPLETELY ANY REFERENCE TO NORTH VIETNAM'S AGGRESSION AND ANY PROPOSALS FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE COUNTRY.

4. LOCAL ATMOSPHERICS: TONE OF REMARKS BY KEY PERSONALITIES INDICATES THAT BOTH INDIAN HOSTS AND ESCAP LEADERSHIP WISHES TO AVOID ANY ACRIMONY IN DELHI MEETING AND WOULD PREFER NO INTRODUCTION OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES. THIS WAS CLEARLY THE MESSAGE CONVEYED IN OPENING ADDRESS OF INDIAN PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI. SUBSEQUENTLY, CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN (INDIAN MINISTER OF COMMERCE) EXPRESSED CONCERN TO AMBASSADOR FERGUSON THAT HE HOPED REAL EFFORT COULD BE MADE TO AVOID POLITIZING CURRENT ESCAP SESSION. FINALLY, ESCAP EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MARAMIS HAS MADE CLEAR HIS OWN STRONG CONCERN THAT ESCAP MEETING CONCENTRATE ON ECONOMIC NOT POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF THE REGION.

5. NHUONG SPEECH PROVISIONALLY SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28. WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT VIEWS ON ACCEPTABLE OPTIONS AND OTHER COMMENTS ASAP.
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